

Brendan Vacations: Best of Ireland and Scotland Summer 2019

Day 1 - Arrive Dublin (2 Nights)

Explore the Celtic heritage and hospitality of Ireland and Scotland on this grand adventure through beautiful landscapes and enchanting cities. Our first day sees us delve into the whimsy of the Irish capital, before joining our fellow travellers and Travel Director for a Welcome Reception at a traditional Irish pub. Welcome Reception

Accommodations: Ballsbridge/Mespil

Meals: Welcome Reception

Day 2 - Dublin Sightseeing and Free Time

Drive through the streets of Dublin, joining your Local Specialist for a sightseeing tour past the stately Georgian Square and St. Patrick's Cathedral, the tallest church in Ireland. Enjoy a leisurely day exploring the city. Stop for a pint of "the Black Stuff" in Temple Bar, admire the colourful performers on Grafton Street or consider joining an Optional Experience this evening to tap your feet to the lively sounds of Irish music at an Irish cabaret. Full Breakfast

Meals: Full Breakfast

Day 3 - Dublin – Kildare – Waterford

'Dive Into Culture' and gain insights into Ireland's strong tradition of breeding world-class thoroughbreds at the Irish National Stud Farm. Enjoy a guided walk admiring the powerful steeds that have made racing history and stroll around the tranquil Japanese gardens. We travel to the House of Waterford Crystal this afternoon and 'Dive Into Culture' yet again to witness this delicate craft, watching talented master craftsmen at work in their workshop. Full Breakfast

Accommodations: Marina/Fitzwilton

Meals: Full Breakfast

Day 4 - Waterford – Blarney – Co. Kerry (2 Nights)

Bend over backwards and kiss the Blarney Stone to acquire the 'gift of the gab' before crossing the Kerry Mountains to County Kerry. We journey to 1930s Ireland this evening, visiting the working farms of Muckross, where we'll learn about traditional farming and meet the families who ply the land. 'Connect With Locals' over a Be My Guest dinner, savouring delicious local flavours in the Quilles Farmhouse against the scenic backdrop of the lakes of Killarney. Full Breakfast, Dinner with wine

Accommodations: Killarney Towers/Manor West Tralee

Meals: Full Breakfast, Dinner with wine

Day 5 - Ring of Kerry Excursion

The astounding beauty of Iveragh Peninsula accompanies us on this soul-stirring coastal journey around the 'Ring of Kerry' - a dramatic landscape of mountains, loughs and lakes which have inspired writers and poets for centuries. See Daniel O'Connell's Cahirciveen, the fishing village of Waterville, the Black Valley and Moll's Gap with the Macgillycuddy's Reeks peaks in the distance. Full Breakfast

Meals: Full Breakfast

Day 6 - Co. Kerry – Galway – Enniscrone

Drive to Adare, one of Ireland's prettiest villages, known for its thatched cottages. The imposing stone cathedral, built on the site of an old prison and Eyre Square take centre stage on our next stop in Galway, where we'll enjoy some free time to explore the city before continuing our journey northward. This evening we dine in our hotel. Full Breakfast, Dinner

Accommodations: Ocean Sands/Harlequin

Meals: Full Breakfast, Dinner

Day 7 - Enniscrone – Donegal ?? Londonderry

Head north to Donegal with its 'Diamond' centre before joining a Local Specialist in Londonderry to stroll along its 17th-century walls. See the "Troubles" neighbourhood of Bogside, with its murals depicting the battles of that time. Full Breakfast

Accommodations: Everglades/City

Meals: Full Breakfast

Day 8 - Londonderry – Giant's Causeway – Belfast

Tread in the footsteps of Finn Mac Cool and along the other-worldly Giant's Causeway 'steps' that descend into the sea. Your visit will 'Make A Difference' by helping to conserve this iconic landmark. We arrive in Belfast later and visit the Titanic Belfast Visitor Centre where we'll 'Dive Into Culture' and gain insights into the tragic story of the famous ship that met its end in the Atlantic. The rest of the evening is yours to enjoy the vibrant nightlife of the capital of Northern Ireland. Full Breakfast

Accommodations: Stormont/Maldron

Meals: Full Breakfast

Day 9 - Belfast – Glasgow (2 Nights)

Join your Local Specialist this morning for an included city tour which will take you to Queen's University and the Baroque Revival-style City Hall. We board our ferry at Larne and cross to Cairnryan in Scotland, driving through the Ayrshire countryside bound for Glasgow, our home for the next two nights. Full Breakfast

Accommodations: Hilton Garden Inn City Centre/Glynhill

Meals: Full Breakfast

Day 10 - Glasgow Orientation

Delve into Scotland's intriguing cultural capital and stroll through the Toon to admire views of George Square and the River Clyde, once the heart of Scotland's shipbuilding industry. We head to whisky country next, visiting the beautiful Glengoyne whisky distillery where we'll 'Dive Into Culture' and learn how to make Scotland's favourite honey-coloured drink with a chance to sample a wee dram. Our hearts warmed, we return to Glasgow for some free time to explore the city. Full Breakfast

Meals: Full Breakfast

Day 11 - Glasgow – Glencoe – Isle of Skye

Journey along the famous bonnie banks of Loch Lomond to the tragic site of the 1692 massacre of the MacDonalds at the 'Glen of Weeping'. Continue to Fort William at the foot of Britain's highest mountain, Ben Nevis. At Glenfinnan, we see the viaduct which Hogwarts Express crosses to get to Harry Potter's beloved school of magic. Cross by ferry to the Isle of Skye where we'll dine in our hotel. Full Breakfast, Dinner

Accommodations: Dunollie/Kings Arms

Meals: Full Breakfast, Dinner

Day 12 - Isle of Skye – Loch Ness – Culloden – Scottish Highlands

We leave the rugged beauty of Skye behind and venture to the site where three lochs meet. View Eilean Donan Castle before travelling along the banks of Loch Ness in search of the elusive monster that bears its name. The bloody battlefield of Culloden is our next stop, where we spend a poignant moment reflecting on the many men who lost their lives in the brief but brutal battle between the

Redcoats and Bonnie Prince Charlie's Jacobites. This evening we spend the evening dining at our hotel in the Scottish Highlands. Full Breakfast, Dinner
Accommodations: Highlander
Meals: Full Breakfast, Dinner

Day 13 - Scottish Highlands – Pitlochry – St. Andrews – Edinburgh (2 Nights)

Traversing the dramatic landscapes of the Scottish Highlands, we pass Pitlochry before arriving in St. Andrews to see its famous golf course on which golfing greats have clamoured to play for centuries. We cross the scenic Firth of Forth to enchanting Edinburgh, our home for the next two nights. Take to the beguiling streets of the Scottish capital this evening, soaking up its warmth and conviviality with an evening of traditional dance, music and Scottish fare. In August, certain departures include tickets to the spectacular Edinburgh Tattoo. Full Breakfast
Accommodations: Novotel/Apex Haymarket
Meals: Full Breakfast

Day 14 - Edinburgh Sightseeing and Free Time

Join your Local Specialist for a guided sightseeing tour which includes a visit to Edinburgh Castle, surveying the city from imposing Castle Rock. See the Royal Mile, the elegant Palace of Holyrood in the shadow of Arthur's Seat, and the new Scottish Parliament building. As our memorable holiday comes to an end, we join our Travel Director and fellow travellers for a Farewell Dinner to reminisce over shared experiences. Full Breakfast, Farewell Dinner
Meals: Full Breakfast, Farewell Dinner

Day 15 - Depart Edinburgh

For now it's time to say a fond farewell to Scotland and our newfound friends, at the end of an unforgettable Celtic sojourn. Transfers are available. Conditions apply. Full Breakfast
Meals: Full Breakfast